

# **Rhode Island Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH)**

**February 17, 2016**

## **Meeting Minutes (DRAFT)**

### **Attendees:**

<b>Michael Tondra</b>	<b>Office of Housing &amp; Community Dev't (Co-Chair)</b>
<b>Elizabeth Roberts</b>	<b>Executive Office of Health &amp; Human Services (Co-Chair)</b>
<b>Jamia McDonald</b>	<b>Dept. of Children, Youth and Families</b>
<b>Melba Depena</b>	<b>Dept. of Human Services</b>
<b>Michelle Wilcox</b>	<b>Advisory Council on Homelessness (Crossroads)</b>
<b>Maria Montanaro</b>	<b>Dept. of BHDDH</b>
<b>Anya Rader Wallack</b>	<b>Executive Office of Health &amp; Human Services/Medicaid</b>
<b>Scott Grego</b>	<b>Dept. of Labor and Training</b>
<b>Charles Fogarty</b>	<b>Dept. of Elderly Affairs</b>
<b>Kim Ripoli</b>	<b>Veterans Affairs</b>
<b>Barbara Fields</b>	<b>RI Housing</b>
<b>Eileen Botelho</b>	<b>Dept. of Education</b>
<b>Emmett Hardiman</b>	<b>RI Public Defender</b>
<b>Michael DiBiase</b>	<b>Dept. of Administration</b>
<b>Nicole Alexander-Scott</b>	<b>Dept. of Health</b>
<b>Daniel McKee</b>	<b>Lieutenant Governor</b>

### **Minutes:**

- I. The meeting was called to order at 10:08 am by M. Tondra. M. Tondra welcomed the membership to the first meeting of the reconvened Interagency Council on Homelessness. Member introductions followed. A quorum was present and noted.
- II. E. Roberts provided opening remarks. Ms. Roberts, who will serve alongside M. Tondra in a leadership role, has worked with the Governor' Office and other parties in efforts to integrate homelessness into agency's programing. Ms. Roberts noted the importance of the ICH and the need to assure Directors attend so that those with policy-making authority are active participants. While today will involve presentations, future meetings will focus on active discussions and be very goal oriented.
- III. M. Tondra and M. Brophy provided an overview of the history of the ICH. First established by Executive Order, it has been given statutory authority through RIGL 40-17. The ICH is charged with meeting at least quarterly, producing an annual report to the State's leadership. An overview of the membership, including the inclusion/purposes of the Advisory Council, was provided. The ICH worked on and adopted in 2012 Opening Doors RI, the State's strategic plan to end homelessness. A main focus of the ICH is coordination among State agencies. Some recent accomplishments related to homelessness, including the creation of the State Rental Subsidy Program and creation of a permanent funding stream for housing/homelessness, were

mentioned. Karen Flora, who will provide staff support to the ICH, was introduced to the membership. Michelle then highlighted recent accomplishments of agencies around the table including the 811 (rental subsidy for elderly/disabled) funding, the RI Housing RoadHome program, Harrington Hall service fair, among other initiatives. The ICH's task going forward will be to establish very specific, achievable goals.

Discussions – The Homeless Management and Information System (HMIS) is housed at the RI Coalition for the Homeless. The conveyance tax has produced over \$3 million in revenue for housing/homelessness, above early projections. Available housing resources were discussed; Rhode Island Housing provided a first draft of a list of State resources available to serve those experiencing Homelessness. The State's system, including the "no-wrong door" policy, was summarized.

- IV. Eric Hirsch and Jim Ryczek presented on the current progress of Opening Doors. J. Ryczek is the Executive Director of the RI Coalition for the Homeless and E. Hirsh heads the State's Homelessness Management and Information System (HMIS) performance/data committee. A fact sheet was distributed which estimated the 2015 homeless population at 4,263. While the State saw decreases in homelessness in 2013 & 2014, 2015's count is an increase from the previous year. The increase was in great part attributable to single adults. Though the "chronically homeless" count decreased in 2015, an increase in the "newly homeless" was referenced. Both J. Ryczek and E. Hirsh referenced the efforts of the Zero:2016 campaign to end homelessness, making particularly note of the veterans housed over the past year. The success of the Housing 1<sup>st</sup> approach was also summarized. J. Ryczek provided recent State "Report Cards", along with the current year's draft report. These documents are intended, in a constructive-productive way, to summarize the State's efforts in meeting goals of the Opening Doors RI plan. While improvement is needed, some success has been realized to date. One area the ICH should focus upon is the "increase economic security" goal. Barriers that need to be overcome are also highlighted.

Discussions – Any date requests for E. Hirsch/HMIS will be coordinated through Keshav Poddar of the Governor's Office.

- V. Since inadequate time remained to discuss the State's CABHI (Cooperative Agreement to Benefit Homeless Individuals) grant, the membership agreed to postpone that agenda item until the next meeting.

A schedule of future meetings will be forwarded to the membership. Agencies were encouraged to have their staff work with Karen between meetings. If any member of the ICH would like to convene a smaller working group in advance of the next meeting, please contact M. Tondra/Karen.

- VI. M. Tondra accepted Public Comment(s)

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 am.